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OENIADAE

II

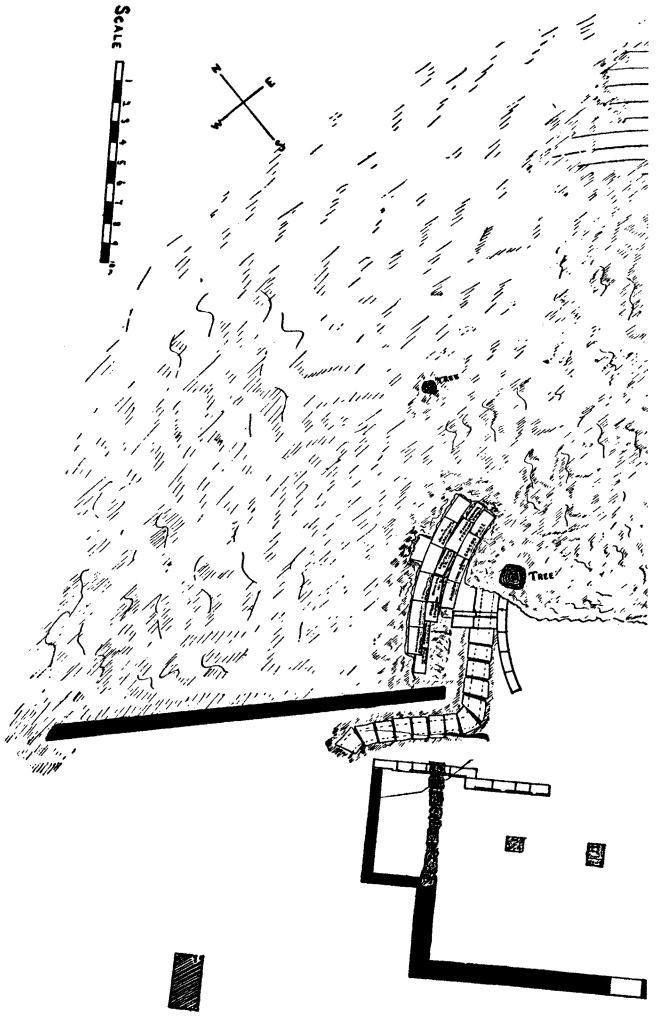
THE THEATRE

[PLATE VIII]

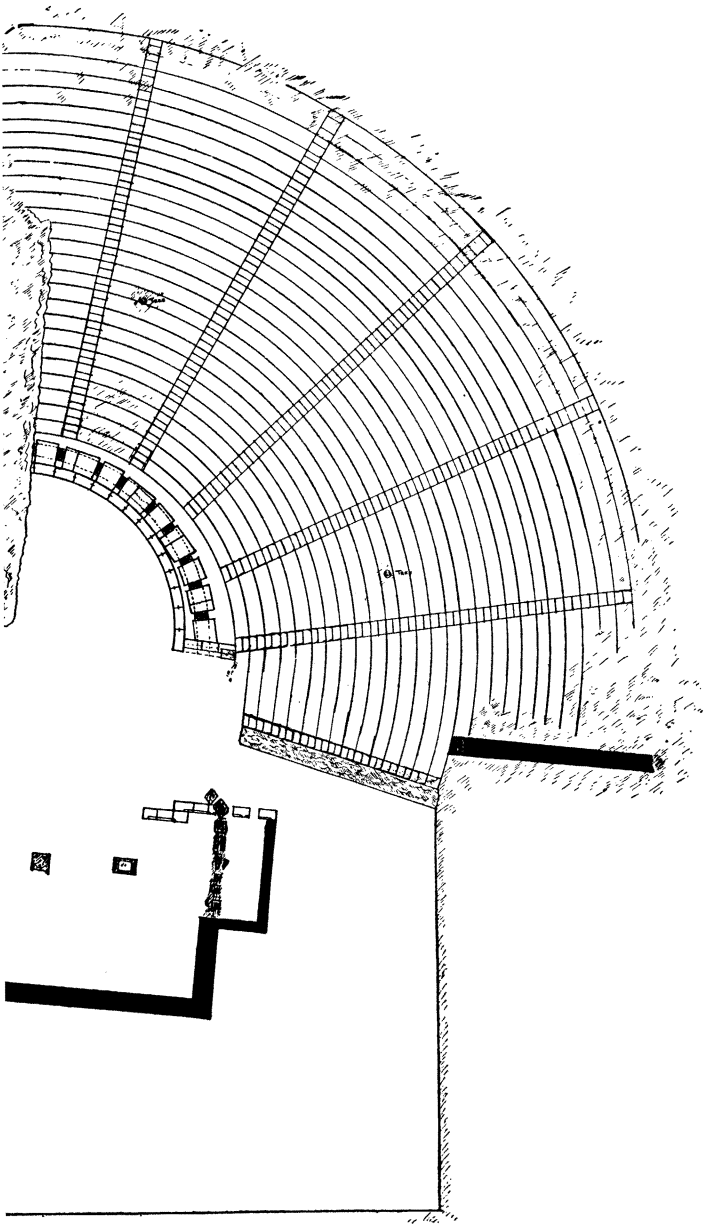
THE theatre at Oeniadae, which is to-day known by the peasants as τὸ παιγνίδες, is situated in the eastern part of the enclosure formed by the walls of the city. Although it is but a short distance from the wall on this eastern side, it is separated from it by a steep hill which rises in this part of the city. The theatre was built in the western slope of this hill and faces toward the southwest, commanding a view across the breadth of the enclosure, dotted with oak trees, to the lower marshy plain and the mouth of the Acheloüs with the blue sea and Echinades islands beyond. The site is easily reached by taking the path which passes through the great gate in the wall northeast from the acropolis (*i.e.* Gate 9), and following this northward toward the ancient harbor; the theatre lies to the right of this path, which probably follows the line of an ancient street, traces of which may still be seen near the theatre.

The work of excavating the theatre was all done in the latter half of the month of December, 1900, with the exception of some few days of labor in the following May; these were spent in uncovering the inscribed seat blocks in the western part of the cavea.

It was decided to lay bare but half of the orchestra and cavea, and the eastern half was selected, thus leaving undis-



PLAN OF THE THE



ATRE AT OENIADAE

turbed a large oak tree which had grown up in the western side of the orchestra (cf. PLATE VIII). The greatest accumulation of earth, about 1 m. in depth, was immediately at the foot of the tiers of seats (cf. Fig. 19). This deposit consisted of a fine, dark leaf mould, which had been formed in the course of years from the decaying leaves of the trees growing near at hand, and, mixed with it, fragments of rock and small stones,



FIGURE 19. — THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE.
Eastern Side of the Orchestra, showing the Curb and the Covering over Drain.

which had rolled down the slope from above. The deposit became gradually thinner as the stage-buildings were approached, and over these it was comparatively insignificant, amounting to only a few centimetres.

Cyriacus of Ancona, who visited Acarnania in the month of February, 1436, is the first writer to make mention of a theatre at Oeniadae, or Trigardo, under which title he describes the site. The cavea of the theatre was then in a more perfect state of preservation than it is at present, for Cyriacus counted

thirty rows of seats — "in medio civitatis theatrum XXX. gradibus altitudinis." This was probably close to the original number, for the slope of the hill, where the theatre is built, would not admit the placing of more rows without artificially enlarging the cavea with embankments and retaining walls.

Colonel Leake, who visited the spot in April, 1809,[1] could then count twenty-five rows of seats cut from the rock, and saw "some foundations of a proscenium projecting forty-five feet," whatever that may mean. Sir William Mure,[2] who followed in Leake's footsteps in 1838, could not find the ruin at all, and, indeed, without a knowledge of its exact location within the city walls, one might pass, before the excavation, within a few paces without observing the edges of the rock-cut seats projecting from the earth. Heuzey,[3] who came in 1856, claims to have counted thirty rows, but the existence of this number at that time seems to have been impossible, for Schillbach,[4] who visited Oeniadae in October, 1857, counted only eighteen rows, and judged Heuzey to be mistaken in his count. Bursian,[5] a few years later, mentions but twenty rows, and, even after the excavation, I have been unable to find traces of so many as thirty. In a careful examination before the excavation, I could count but twenty-one rows, and, in the end, this number was increased by only six, making a total of twenty-seven rows, of which traces may now be seen.

A. THE CAVEA

The whole eastern part of the cavea of the theatre is cut from the solid rock of the hillside, which is a gray limestone formation. Such being the case, the cavea needs no supporting wall of masonry to divide it from the eastern parodos. The rock

[1] Cf. W. M. Leake, *Northern Greece*, vol. III, p. 561.

[2] William Mure, *Journal of a Tour in Greece*, vol. I, p. 109.

[3] Heuzey, *L'Acarnanie*, p. 445 : "On y compte une trentaine de gradins sur un rayon d'environ douze mètres." Knowing the breadth of the seats, this statement is a manifest impossibility.

[4] *Ztschr. d. Gesell. f. Erdkunde zu Berlin*, 1872, vol. VII, p. 113.

[5] Bursian, *Geog. von Griechenland*, vol. II, p. 121.

itself at this point is cut into a smooth, vertical surface, and serves as a boundary wall. This rock wall extends from the bottom row of seats for a distance of 10.35 m., inclining toward the stage-building. At this point the outcropping of rock lacked the requisite height to serve as a retaining wall for more than the fifteen lower rows of seats. The line was broken at this point, and was resumed at a distance of 2.80 m. toward the middle of the first wedge of seats. From this point a supporting wall of masonry was constructed, not, however, continuing in the same direction as the rock-cut wall of the parodos, but running in a line nearly parallel with the proscenium. This wall is built of large blocks of masonry, which can hardly be termed polygonal in comparison with the work on the walls of the city, for the stones are rough and unshapen and more Cyclopean in style.[1] The wall is not intact, being preserved for a length of only 8 m. or 9 m., and to a height of 1 m. or 1.50 m.

In contrast to the irregular boundary of the cavea on the east, we find at the west a retaining wall of regular Hellenic masonry, with four courses remaining. The first course is imbedded in the earth; the second measures 0.52 m. in height; the third, 0.615 m.; and the fourth, 0.475 m. The wall is preserved for a distance of 19.80 m., but is in a hopelessly ruined condition at its outer end. The block at the inner end of each course is bevelled to fit the slope of the cavea. This wall was necessary at the west, because the natural rock failed on this side, and the cavea was pieced out with an embankment, and seats, formed of blocks of white limestone, were inserted.

The space between the bottom row of seats and the curb of the orchestra broadens as one approaches the parodoi from either side; at the back the width is but 2.05 m., while at the side it is 2.60 m. This would lead one to suppose that the line of the seats was elliptical, with the two foci of the ellipse at a distance of 3.30 m. on each side of the centre of the orchestra, since the length from the centre of the orchestra

[1] Cf. Bursian, *Geog. von Griechenland*, vol. II, p. 121.

back to the first row of seats is 9.65 m. along the axis of the theatre. But, inasmuch as the curve does not begin to turn inward after passing the transverse axis of the theatre, I assume that the lines of seats are parts of a circle, and the centre used for describing them was from 0.60 m. to 0.75 m.[1] nearer to the stage-building than the centre of the orchestra. The radius used for describing the line of the lower row had a length of about 10.50 m.

Another peculiarity is that the aisles, or flights of small steps or wedges which divide the cavea into cunei, do not radiate from the point used in describing the lines of seats, but centre at a point about 1.45 m. nearer to the stage-building; this tends to decrease the space in each wedge, excepting the one at the outside, whose outside aisle is a radius of the circle of the seats.[2] This would have made this last wedge of seats broader at the top than the others, if it had not been contracted by a secondary boundary wall, as previously described.

We thus have three different centres used in the construction of the theatre: first, that of the orchestra; second, the centre used in describing the lines of seats; and third, a centre for the aisles.

The rows of seats are, on an average, 0.70 m. in breadth and are 0.345 m. in height,[3] so that the pitch of the cavea is 27.5° above the horizontal. (Cf. Fig. 20.)

[1] The work in the cutting of the rock for the cavea and in the theatre generally is so rude that some of the measurements cannot be determined with any degree of accuracy.

[2] The wall of Hellenic masonry, supporting the cavea at the west, radiates from the same centre as the inner aisles; so it is in a line with the aisle bounding the inner side of the first eastern wedge.

[3] This is about the normal measurement found in Greek theatres, *e.g.* Athens, Piraeus, and Eretria, 0.32 m.; Corinth, 0.33 m. (?); Epidaurus, 0.34 m.; Sicyon and Thoricus, 0.35 m.; Megalopolis, 0.37 m. The seat-blocks at Corinth were 0.33 m. in thickness, but the level of each successive tier was only 0.25 m. above the preceding. (Cf. *Am. J. Arch.* 1897, vol. I, pp. 483, 487.) It seems to me that since the seat-blocks in the theatre at Corinth were only 0.35 m. in width, and the additional space of 0.35 m. was packed with earth, this space was sunk to a lower level than the surface of the block, thus giving room for the feet of the spectators and allowing the full height of the block to appear. Of course, the pitch of the cavea was only 20° above the horizontal.

Beginning at the rock-cut wall bounding the eastern parodos, we find first a mass of rock left to a width of 0.85 m. and next a flight of small steps, which measures but 0.66 m. across; so that, besides differing from the other aisles in its centre of radiation, it differs also from them in its width, for they are 0.75 m. across. In these aisles there are two steps at the end of each row of seats, so that these steps are only 0.35 m. in depth and have risers 0.175 m. in height. On the east the first wedge of seats has a breadth of 3.25 m. along the edge of the second[1] row; the next wedge measures 3.27 m. on the same row, and this space is continued in the following cunei.

The cavea forms somewhat more than a half-circle, but the lines of seats, after passing the transverse axis, become tangent to the circle, and, instead of inclining

[1] I give the measurement for the second row, because what is really the first row does not appear until after the descent into the space between the seats and the curb of the orchestra.

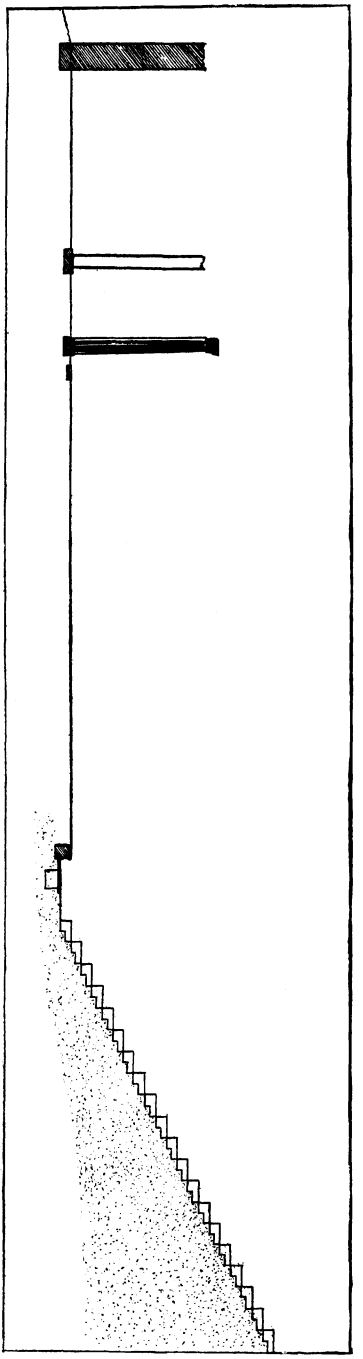


FIGURE 20.—THEATRE AT OENIADAE. CROSS-SECTION SHOWING PITCH OF CAVEA.

inward toward the proscenium, they continue toward it at right angles for a distance of *c.* 2.70 m. farther.

The eastern half of the cavea shows five cunei of rock-cut seats, together with one-half of a sixth, which formed the centre. From this, one would conclude that the whole number of cunei was eleven. The western half of the cavea, however, seems to have been somewhat irregular.

On the eastern side the descent to the covered drain comes at the foot of the aisle bounding the first wedge of seats at its inner side. This descent occurs on the west at the same distance from the retaining wall, but here we find no aisle. For the space of three normal cunei the natural rock was pieced out, on this western side, with large blocks of white limestone to form the seats. The remains of the lowest of these rows of seats begin at the descent to the covered drain, and four blocks are to be seen. The combined lengths of these blocks amount to 5.09 m., which is a much greater space than is required for the bottom row of any normal wedge. We know that these four blocks were always in the same relative position, because an inscription of two lines extends across all four. At the inner end of this row the natural rock begins, and probably an aisle was constructed at that point. Here, then, we have the space for three wedges with no trace of an aisle. We are forced to believe that some other arrangement was made in this part of the theatre, for it is incredible that the blocks in the three rows that we found could have slipped down the slope to their present position and preserved their alignment, as they have done. Not until the eleventh row of seats could the space of 5.09 m. be found between the aisles in the eastern half of the cavea, and, moreover, there are no remains apparent which could have formed lower rows of normal length. Three rows of these inserted seats appear and one stone of a fourth — one other block, that undoubtedly belonged with these, lies on the curb, bounding the orchestra on the west side.

No trace of a break for an aisle occurs in any of the three

rows, the two upper of which extend farther toward the western parodos and are much greater in length than the lower. The arrangement of these blocks can best be seen by a reference to Figs. 21, 22, and PLATE VIII.

The first block of the lowest row begins at a distance of 0.15 m. from the lower step of the descent to the drain. All



FIGURE 21. — THE SEATS OF MASONRY IN THE WESTERN HALF OF THE CAVEA OF THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE.

of the blocks are of the same relative thickness, — that is, about 0.345 m., which is the height of the rock-cut seats.

I give the inscriptions found upon the seats in these three rows, beginning with the lowest row (Fig. 22). The letters of all the inscriptions agree with one another in their general character; and, although some are more carefully cut than others, yet, as a whole, they are characterized by the broadened apices at the ends of the straight strokes. We find ≶ invariably made with flaring upper and lower strokes, except in the name Ὀνάσιμον, found on the first block of the lowest row, and in

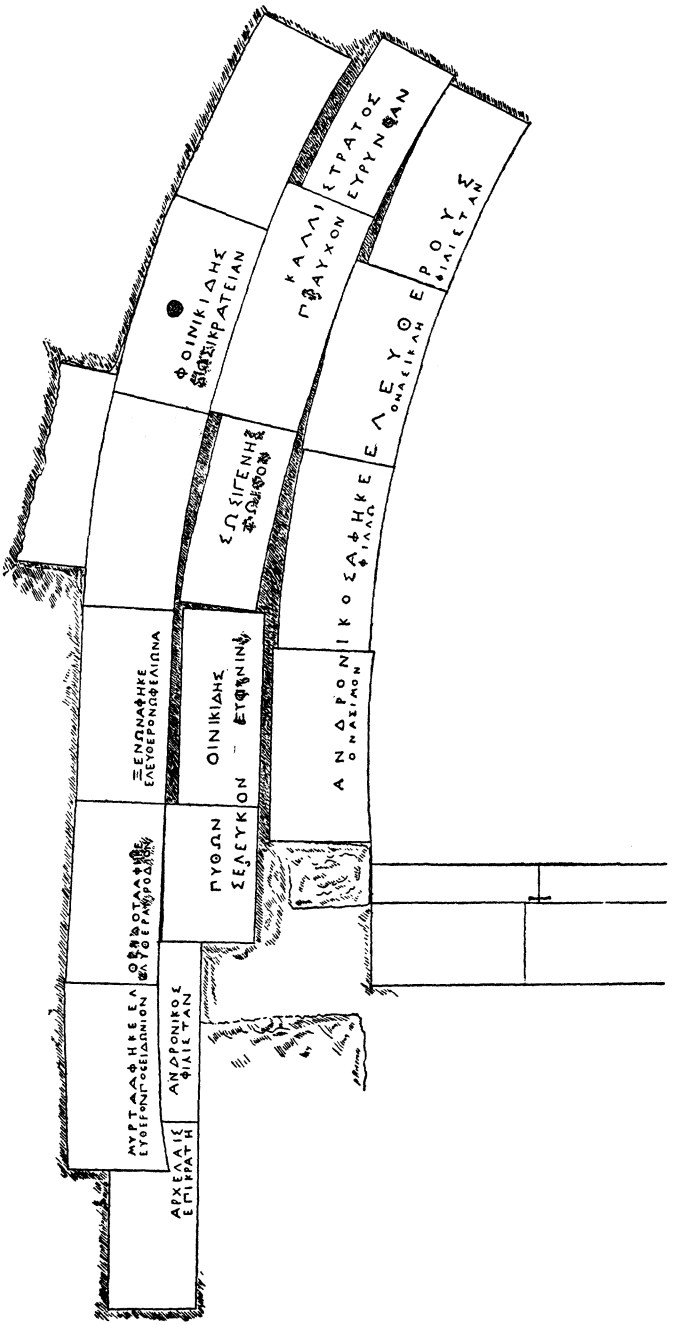


FIGURE 22.—THE INSCRIPTIONS ON THE SEATS OF MASONRY IN THE WESTERN HALF OF THE CAVEA OF THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE.

the curved form C, seen on the first stone of the highest row. From the letter forms in general and the finding of both ϟ and C, it seems safe to date the inscriptions in the latter part of the third or at the beginning of the second century B.C.

The inscriptions also agree in content, and all state that a certain person set free a certain slave or slaves. The verb is not always expressed, and in that case there is engraved simply the name of the master in the nominative, followed by that of the freed slave in the accusative case. We notice both men and women as masters of slaves at Oeniadae and both male and female slaves. The formula *ἀφῆκε ἐλεύθερον*, although not commonly found, is, nevertheless, known from other inscriptions.[1]

The four blocks of the lower row are used for one inscription; the first stone is 1.30 m. in length and 0.69 m. in width; the second, 1.27 m. in length and 0.61 m. in width; the third, 1.25 m. in length and 0.63 m. in width; the fourth, 1.27 m. in length and 0.58 m. in width. The letters in the first line of the inscription are from 0.05 m. to 0.065 m. in height, while those of the second measure only 0.035 m.

1. Ἀνδρόνικος ἀφῆκε ἐλευθέρους
Ὀνάσιμον, Φιλλώ, Ὀνασικλῆ, Φιλίσταν.

The Doric forms are to be noticed in the names in this inscription, as also in the following nos. 3, 7, 8, and 9. From the grouping of the four names of the slaves, male and female alternately, we may suppose that each pair were man and wife. The name Phillo occurs, according to Pittakis, for the first time in an Attic inscription, published by him in Ἐφ. Ἀρχ., 1859, p. 1828, no. 3500. In *C.I.A.* II, 988, however, this case is read as Κιλλώ. In *C.I.A.* II, 3012, we find the undoubted reading Φιλλὼ Θηβαία.

The first stone of the second row is 1.29 m. in length and 0.61 m. in width; the upper right-hand corner of it, however,

[1] Cf. *C.I.G. Gr. Septentr.* vol. I, no. 1779 (from Thespiae); no. 1780 (from Thespiae), and no. 3321 (from Chaeronea).

is covered by the end block of the third row, so that it shows only a width of 0.18 m. for a distance of 0.33 m. from the right end. The end of the inscription comes on this narrow band. The letters are 0.06 m. in height.

2. Ἀρχελαΐς
Ἐπικράτη.

The second stone of the second row is 1.23 m. in length, but only about 0.28 m. of its width projects from under the block in the row above. The letters are from 0.05 m. to 0.06 m. in height.

3. Ἀνδρόνικος
Φιλίσταν.

This may refer to the same master and one of the slaves of the first inscription. In that case we may suppose this inscription to be slightly older; when Andronicus freed other slaves he had Philista's name inscribed also among them.

The third stone of the second row is 0.93 m. in length and 0.625 m. in width. The alignment of this stone, and the others which follow it in the row, is 0.35 m. in front of the two preceding stones. The letters are about 0.06 m. in height; they are poorly cut and are not in perfect alignment. The two last letters of the second name run over on the next block to the right.

4. Πύθων
Σέλευκον.

The fourth stone of the second row is 1.35 m. in length and 0.55 m. in width. The letters are 0.06 m. in height.

5. Οἰνικίδης
Εὔθυνιν.

Both the name of the master, Oenicides, and that of the female slave, Euthynis, occur here, I believe, for the first time.

The fifth stone of the second row is 1.29 m. in length and 0.53 m. in width. The letters are roughly cut and are *c.* 0.05 m. in height.

6. Σωσιγένης
Ζωΐ̈[λ]ον.

The sixth stone of the second row is 1.54 m. in length and 0.62 m. in width; the inscription runs over the seventh stone also, which is 1.10 m. in length and 0.54 m. in width. The letters are 0.07 m. in height.

7. Καλλίστρατος
Π[ρ]αΰχον, Εὐρυν[ό]αν.

The first stone of the third row is 1.28 m. in length and 0.65 m. in width. The letters are from 0.045 m. to 0.055 m. in height.

8. Μύρτα ἀφῆκε ἐλ-
εύθερον Ποσειδώνιον.

The form Μύρτα is not found elsewhere, but Μύρτος, Μυρτώ, and Μυρτίς are common.

The second stone of the third row is 1.24 m. in length and 0.65 m. in width; the letters are 0.045 m. in height.

9. Θευδότα ἀφῆκε
[ἐ]λ⟨ε⟩υθέραν Ῥόδιον.

The second E of ἐλευθέραν seems to have been omitted by the stone-cutter.

The third stone of the third row is 1.29 m. in length and 0.65 m. in width. The letters are 0.045 m. in height.

10. Ξένων ἀφῆκε
ἐλεύθερον Ὠφελίωνα.

The fourth stone of the third row is blank; it is 1.34 m. in length. The fifth stone is 1.29 m. in length and 0.67 m. in width;

the letters of its inscription are poorly cut and are 0.07 m. in height. A circular hole, 0.11 m. in diameter, is cut in the stone at a distance of 0.63 m. from the left end and 0.37 m. from the bottom; its purpose is uncertain.

11. Φοινικίδης
Σωσικράτειαν.

The sixth block, which ends this third row, is uninscribed. Only one block of a fourth series was brought to light, and that bore no inscription. Additional excavation might increase our knowledge of the arrangement of the cunei in the western half of the cavea and discover additional inscribed seat-blocks; only a complete clearing of the whole western slope would make it certain that no more were *in situ*. It seems probable that the space between the end of the natural rock and the western supporting wall of the cavea was filled with one great wedge with seats of masonry, occupying the space of three normal wedges; or again it is possible that this part of the theatre was never completed.

B. THE ORCHESTRA

The steadily widening space between the lowest row of seats and the raised curb bounding the circle of the orchestra has already been mentioned. At the aisle, between the first and second cunei on the east, the bottom row of seats is bound across to this curb by a series of white limestone blocks, which formed a descent of two steps (0.33 m.) from the level of the orchestra to the sunken space where was constructed a canal for carrying away the rain-water as it flowed down from the seats above. The same construction is found also at the corresponding place on the west side of the orchestra. From these points onward toward the stage-buildings the surface of the ground is on a level with that of the orchestra circle.

Of the blocks forming the upper of the two steps on the east, only one remains in place at the end toward the seats; this

block is 0.70 m. in length and 0.49 m. in width. It projects 0.11 m. into the aisle at this point; the lower step is formed of three blocks which project 0.31 m. farther. These three blocks of the lower step were fastened together with clamps, which were hidden from view by the upper step. The two steps on the western side are preserved intact. They are formed of two blocks each; the two blocks of the upper step are respectively 1.05 m. and 1.20 m. in length and 0.56 m. in width, while the two lower are 1.15 m. and 1.095 m. in length, and appear for a width of 0.26 m.

The sunken space between the curb of the orchestra and the seats is partially paved with large plaques of white limestone, about 0.10 m. in thickness. These serve not so much as paving stones as covering for the drain which begins at the eastern side of the orchestra and passes around to the western parodos (cf. Fig. 19). Owing to the slope of the hill toward the northwest, there could be no outlet for the water on the eastern side, hence it was all carried around to the one outlet on the west. At the point where it begins (*i.e.* at the steps on the eastern side of the orchestra), this drain is 0.70 m. out from the curb of the orchestra; but at the fifth space between the plaques covering it, it is only 0.34 m. from the curb. The canal is here cut in the natural rock, and is 0.58 m. in width and 0.39 m. in depth. After passing around the orchestra, it goes out under the two steps on the western side, continues to the western parodos, and there turns at nearly right angles through it. After passing beneath the two steps, the drain was covered by irregularly shaped plaques placed close together; thirteen of these were uncovered, the drain being followed only through the western parodos. These last plaques, of course, did not appear in the finished theatre, but were covered by a considerable depth of earth. A steady slope is perceived in the course of the drain, which on the western side of the orchestra is 0.50 m. wide and 0.56 m. in depth.

The large plaques covering the drain on the eastern side of the orchestra have in general a length of 1.09 m., which is

about half the distance from the curb of the orchestra to the seats (cf. Fig. 23). The first four plaques are not close to the curb of the orchestra, but their spacing from it is so graduated as to follow the course of the drain, which corresponds to the curve of the seats. Spaces are left between the plaques, so that the streams of water might easily pass down into the canal. The following measurements of the plaques

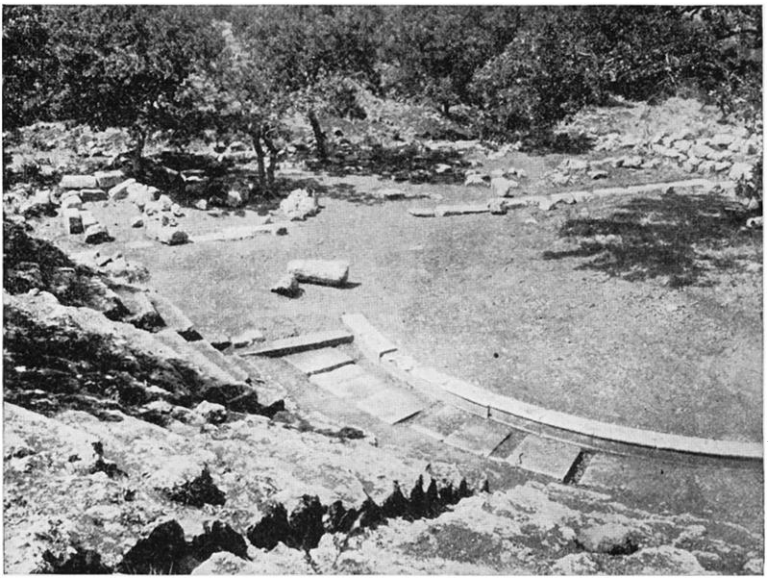


FIGURE 23. — VIEW OF EASTERN PART OF THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE, LOOKING FROM UPPER PART OF CAVEA.

and spaces will give an idea of the arrangement for one-half of the distance toward the other side of the orchestra. Beginning at the two steps, we have: stone, 0.81 m.; space, 0.245 m.; stone, 0.995 m.; space, 0.25 m.; stone, 1.02 m.; space, 0.30 m.; two stones, 1.35 m.; space, 0.28 m.; stone, 0.945 m.; space, 0.24 m.; two stones, 1.34 m.; space, 0.30 m.; stone, 0.91 m.; space, 0.24 m.; two stones, 1.42 m.; space, 0.30 m.; stone, 1.03 m.

The orchestra of the theatre has a radius of 7.65 m.; it is bounded by a curb formed of blocks of white limestone, which

are 0.46 m. in width, thus making the diameter of the orchestra 16.22 m., which is about the size of the orchestra of the theatre at Piraeus (16.34 m.). The orchestra is not paved, but seems to have been finished with a layer of fine, gravelly cement, which when packed down gave a hard surface flush with the top of the curb. The blocks of the curb have a total thickness of 0.46 m., and rest on the rock as a foundation; but only a height of 0.325 m. shows a finished surface above the level of the plaques over the drain. This outside face is finished with simple mouldings above and below, leaving a sunken surface of 0.19 m. between them. The stone which comes at the end of the two steps forming the descent to the drain is finished in this way only half its length, since the other half would be covered by the upper one of the two steps (cf. Fig. 19). This last block has an outside length of 1.10 m., but on the inside curve measures only 1.05 m. The other twelve blocks which were uncovered on the eastern side of the orchestra have an average length of 0.97 m. on the outside face and 0.925 m. on the inside. These blocks were fastened together by simple clamps, formed from an iron bar bent down to form a right angle at each end. The counter sinkings for the clamps are 0.22 m. in length. None of the iron or lead used in them now remains.

On the western side of the orchestra three additional blocks, comparatively thin, were found, which continued the circle from the two steps on toward the proscenium. These blocks were not clamped together, and are set flush with the surface of the ground on both their outer and inner faces. They are left rough on each of these sides, which shows that only the upper surface was intended to be seen. From these we may judge that originally the curbing completed the circle. The completed circle of the orchestra would be almost tangent to the proscenium, which was 8.47 m. from the centre of the orchestra. Undoubtedly the rest of the blocks have been removed for building purposes in later times, for they are of a size easily handled, and were never covered by a deep deposit

of earth; the flat blocks forming the foundation of the middle of the proscenium have disappeared in the same way.

The narrowest part of the parodoi which lead from the orchestra, *i.e.* the space between the end of the outer wall of the parascenium and the wall bounding the cavea, measures 2.65 m. The rock-cut wall of the eastern parodos makes an obtuse angle where the secondary supporting wall begins, and thence continues parallel to the side wall of the parascenium, at a distance of 9.11 m. from it, for a distance of about 20 m., when it joins the street at the back of the stage-building.

C. THE STAGE-BUILDING

The plan of the stage-building of the theatre is simple. The proscenium proper had a length of 16.45 m.; the two parascenia project 0.49 m. from the line of the proscenium, and each have a length of 5.06 m., thus giving a façade whose total length was 26.57 m. At the west the side wall of the parascenium is 5.55 m. in length; the wall then turns inward at a right angle for a distance of 2.74 m., and finally turns another angle and continues for 4.55 m. to the back wall of the stage-building. On the east the side wall of the parascenium measures 5.54 m.; the wall at right angles only 2.39 m., and from that to the back wall, 4.54 m. The back wall has a length of 21.90 m. and is 8.76 m. distant from the proscenium. The back wall with the side walls immediately adjoining it has a width of about 0.85 m., but the side walls of the parascenia are only about 0.45 m. in width. All these walls are in a much ruined condition, and are hardly more than remains of foundations.

The whole middle portion of the proscenium has disappeared, and between the projections for the parascenia only two or three blocks at either end are found *in situ*. These blocks are of white limestone, and vary in thickness from 0.20 m. to 0.30 m., and in width from 0.48 m. to 0.60 m. (cf. Fig. 24). Some scattered blocks, which undoubtedly belonged to the

proscenium, were found, but it was impossible to assign them to their places with certainty.

At a distance of 0.42 m. from the front edge of this foundation of the proscenium there extends a series of cuttings, each of which is 1.25 m. in length, and is cut back to the inner edge of the foundation at a depth of 0.023 m. below the smooth upper surface. The spaces between these cuttings measure



FIGURE 24.—THEATRE AT OENIADAE. REMAINS OF THE PROSCENIUM, LOOKING EAST FROM THE WESTERN PARASCENIUM.

0.25 m. From these measurements we may judge that in the length of the proscenium between the projections of the parascenia there were ten of these cuttings, and in the middle between each series of five was space for a doorway about 2 m. across; *i.e.* 17.55 m. (the total length of the foundation including the extensions behind the front of the parascenia)—[(1.25 m. × 10 cuttings) + (0.25 m. × 8 spaces) + *c.* 0.62 m. (distance of extension beyond cutting on the east) + *c.* 0.43 m. (corresponding extension on the west)] = 2 m.

At the front of the parascenium on the east there are three of these cuttings, 1.25 m. in length, with spaces of 0.25 m. between them, but on the west parascenium we find an irregularity. Proceeding from the projection, we find two cuttings of the regular size and spacing, but after these there comes a space of 0.92 m. before the next cutting, which extends to the end of the foundation, and is not 1.25 m. in length. Moreover, in this case the stone is cut entirely away, and is not a mere sinking as in the other instances. I have found no explanation for this irregularity; possibly a blank wall filled out the space beyond the first two cuttings.

All these cuttings undoubtedly served as sockets into which the pinakes or sections of scenery were set between the columns of the proscenium, the whole forming a background for the orchestra. At the outer end of each cutting, according as the cutting is east or west of the central doorway, there is sunk a shallow hole about 0.055 m. in diameter;[1] these holes probably served in each case as a socket into which a bar might be set to hold the pinax in place. That the pinakes were stationary, and did not swing like doors or were not readily changeable, we may conclude from the fact that the first cutting in the east parascenium comes in front of an overlapping block of the proscenium proper for a distance of 0.21 m., and so forms a slot open at only one end (cf. Fig. 25).

Aside from the remains of the foundation, a number of other fragments were found from which it is possible partially to reconstruct the proscenium, and so gain some idea of its appearance. First among these are the fragments of the columns or pilasters which occupied the spaces between the pinakes. From the accompanying plan of a cross-section of one of the fragments (Fig. 26), it is seen that they were fashioned into a rectangular form at the back with a face of 0.25 m., the same measurement as the spaces left on the

[1] The hole in the cutting first to the west of the eastern parascenium projection seems to be lacking, or at least to be but slightly sunk. Probably the corner column was here reversed, so that no bar was necessary for fastening.

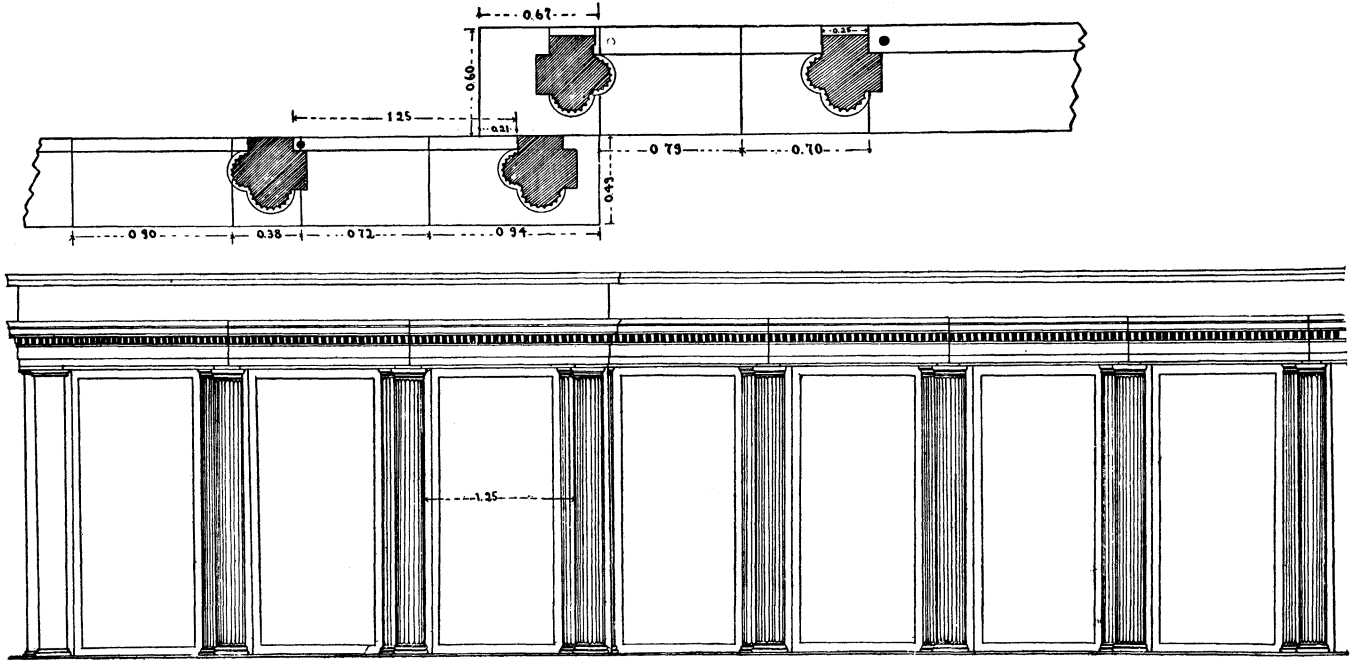


FIGURE 25. — THEATRE AT OENIADAE. RECONSTRUCTION OF FAÇADE AND DETAILS OF STYLOBATE AT EASTERN PARASCENIUM.

stylobate. This face projects 0.095 m. from the body of the column, and on one side, at a distance of 0.05 m. from the flat face, there occurs a slight inset, where one side of a pinax probably fitted. The face of the column opposite to the side with the inset is also cut into a rectangular shape, but projects only 0.075 m. and has a width of 0.21 m. The other two faces are semicircular and are fluted, their diameters corresponding to the measurements of the opposite faces; the total diameter of the column was about 0.43 m. The best preserved half column at the side shows ten flutings, *i.e.* $\frac{1}{2} + 9 + \frac{1}{2}$, but on all the fragments the outer face is so badly worn that its exact number of flutes cannot be determined. Only one fragment was found which clearly exhibits the two rectangular faces, and it at first seemed probable that this might be a column intended for an inner corner, while the regular form of the columns of the proscenium would be that of a trefoil, or cluster of three half-columns, arranged against a rectangular pilaster. A careful examination of the other fragments, however, did not make this certain, for the soft sandstone of which they were composed was so eroded, and the faces were so mutilated, that nothing more than *one rectangular* face could be made out; the other faces may have been all semicircular, or the columns may have been finished as the one already described. If they were all of this unusual shape, which is the only certain shape found, it seems likely that the columns were so arranged on either side of the central doorway that the fluted faces would be turned toward the right on the

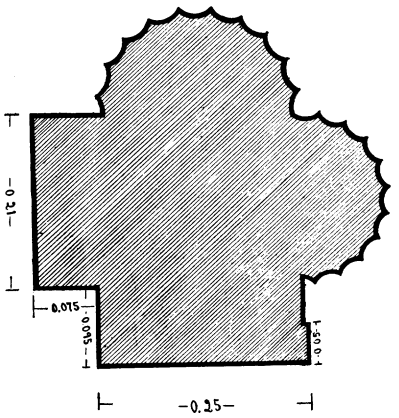


FIGURE 26.—CROSS-SECTION OF A COLUMN OF THE PROSCENIUM.

columns to the right of the doorway as one faced outward, and toward the left on the columns to the left of the doorway; they would thus face the audience in the corresponding half of the cavea. This position would bring the short face with the inset at the opposite end of the cutting for the pinax from that where we noticed the shallow hole, thus showing the means of fastening at each side of the pinax. One small fragment of a torus, belonging to a base or capital, was found. The phenomenon of half-columns fitted against pilasters is a comparatively late development in the proscenium of Greek theatres, and where grooves occur at the side for pinakes, as at Priene, New Pleuron, and Delos, it is dated by Puchstein in the third century B.C.[1]

Several of the architrave blocks, Ionic in style, which surmounted the columns, were discovered in different parts of the theatre; they are broken in pieces and badly worn for the most part, but one lying in the orchestra is preserved for its total length of 1.53 m.[2] The broken fragments of the others show a complete length of about 1.50 m., which was the distance from centre to centre of the columns of the proscenium. As a whole, however, the best preserved piece of the entablature is a block found in the western parodos, the details of which are shown in Fig. 27. This block is broken at one end, so that its preserved length is only 1.40 m., but the break occurs where the stone was cut up to receive the capital of a column, and from the other end of the block we know that this cut extended 0.10 m. from the end, thus giving a total length of 1.50 m.

The total thickness of the architrave block is 0.41 m. and its depth on top is 0.58 m. Above the two plain bands at the lower part of the block is a well-preserved row of dentals, numbering twenty in the space of 1 m. and having a depth of

[1] Cf. O. Puchstein, *Die Griechische Bühne — eine Architektonische Untersuchung*, pp. 17 f.

[2] At the right end of this block there is preserved a piece of the iron clamp leaded into a socket; the clamp is of the same form as those used in the curb of the orchestra.

0.038 m. On the second band of this architrave seven letters are cut, 0.05 m. in height. Their straight strokes end in broadened apices, the O is much less in height than the other letters, the Σ has widely flaring upper and lower strokes, and the X is greater in width than in height, peculiarities of cutting from which we may date the inscription in the third century B.C. The letters form part of the words [τὴ]ν ὀρχή-στ[ραν], but what was done to the orchestra we do not know;

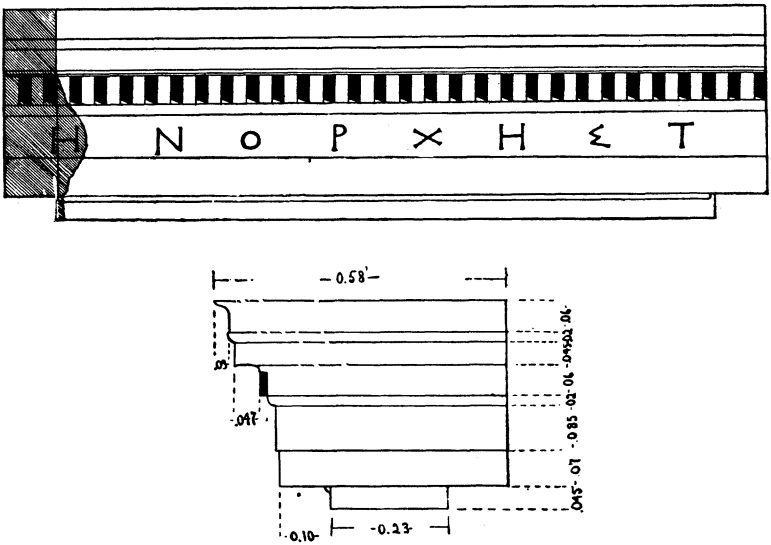


FIGURE 27. — DETAILS OF ARCHITRAVE BLOCK FOUND IN WESTERN PARODOS OF THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE.

possibly the name of the man who gave it or made it was cut on the preceding blocks. This block was probably the middle one of the three forming the front of the western parascenium, since it was fitted squarely to another block at each end.

In the eastern parodos was found another block on which the bands of ornament were continued around the end, showing that it was the first block on the east. It is broken in two pieces, but the total length is *c.* 1.60 m. The cutting to receive the capital at the ornamented end is 0.21 m. in length,

thus allowing the extra length for resting fully on the end pilaster. At a distance of 1.01 m. from the end of the second band were found the first two strokes of the letter N; beyond this point the surface of the stone is broken away, and it would be fruitless to conjecture the first word of the inscription. All the other fragments of the architrave are so worn that no letters appear; we therefore cannot tell whether the inscription appeared only in front of the parascenia or was continuous all across the proscenium.

At the back of the upper surfaces of the two blocks found in the parodoi there appear cuttings 0.16 m. in width and 0.16 m. in depth. These are roughly hewn out, and from their shape one might argue that the beams which rested in them were not horizontal, for in that case we should expect the bottom of the cutting to be level in order to give the beams a firm basis. Here, however, the bottom of the cutting has a rough slant, such as one would expect for sloping roof-beams; if the beams did slope, then there was no raised stage in this part of the theatre, on which actors might appear.

Back of the proscenium we find no second wall or stage wall proper, but enter at once into a large room, the roof of which was supported by columns, whose bases appear at a distance of 2.70 m. from the front of the proscenium. These bases are four in number; they are irregular blocks set in the ground and only agree in being 0.26 m. in thickness. Beginning at the outside wall of the western parascenium, the spacing from centre to centre of these bases is as follows: 6.75 m. + 3.95 m. + 4.30 m. + 4.08 m. + 6.70 m. to the east wall. The space between the two columns at either side was thus about 4 m., leaving a slightly larger space of 4.30 m. between the centre columns. The first base on the west is 0.80 m. × 0.66 m.; the next, 0.80 m. × 1.08 m.; the third, 0.72 m. × 0.84 m., and the eastern, 1.12 m. × 0.72 m. This last basis is squared on top into a slight elevation, which measures 0.53 m. × 0.46 m. It seems likely that the columns used were of stone, for a fragment of a smooth, round limestone column, 0.365 m. in diameter,

was found in the stage-building. This fragment still shows pieces of stucco adhering to its surface; it is 0.28 m. in height, and at the top swells into a slight capital.

The stage-building might be entered through a door in the back wall. This door was 10.30 m. from the eastern end of the back wall and had a width of 1.65 m. As the back wall has a total length of 21.90 m., this door is not in the middle of it, but lies 0.35 m. nearer to the west end. Nevertheless, the doorway came midway in the length of the proscenium, and so was immediately behind the central door in the façade. The difference of 0.35 m. is adjusted by the same difference in the lengths of the two walls, which bound the parascenia at the back; the wall at the west measures 2.74 m. in length, while that on the east is only 2.39 m. (Cf. p. 190.) Why these irregularities in the parascenia should appear is not clear; it remains to examine these chambers more closely.

The walls which separate the two parascenia or side chambers from the main room of the stage-building are in a most ruinous condition, but it may be seen that they started from the inner angle in the side wall and extended forward toward the stylobate in front. The chamber on the east is, therefore, somewhat smaller than that on the west, for these walls do not correspond to the projections in the stylobate of the proscenium, but they meet the stylobate about midway between the projection and either end. In their present ruined condition some blocks continue the line of these walls across the stylobate, but, although the blocks are quite regularly placed, it is evident for several reasons that they could not have been in this position originally. First, because on the western side the line crosses the stylobate where there was once a column; this would make the wall a later addition at least. Secondly, if the wall was built later across the stylobate, we would not expect a column or architrave to be in use; but we have found an architrave block lying in the western parodos, one end of which would rest on the column at this point, since it is not an end block. The architrave block found in the eastern parodos

could be used only at the end, and the cross wall comes out between the next two columns, so that it would break the line of the façade. Finally, since the walls could not have been built across the stylobate and the architrave blocks have remained in position at the same time, then these walls were never extended across the stylobate, for we know that the architrave blocks remained in position until the theatre finally fell into ruin and its use was discontinued, or we should not find these stones blocking up the parodoi. If they had been removed before to make room for the walls, they would have been taken away from the theatre entirely.

These walls, then, originally extended only to the stylobate, the fronts of the parascenia being shut off with columns and pinakes. This argument is given only because the blocks have fallen in such regular position across the stylobate.

It seems likely that these side rooms were entered from the main hall through doors. The utterly ruined condition of the walls makes their position uncertain, but they seem to have been 1.41 m. in width and 1.36 m. from the stylobate. These measurements are the same both at the east side and at the west, and are reasonably sure, because the spaces indicated as doorways are filled with comparatively small fragments which could not have served as foundation blocks, while the rest of the walls are of larger, squared stones.

Why these rooms were of different sizes, and why they did not equal in breadth the projections from the main line of the proscenium, are questions that cannot be answered.

In the ruins of the stage-building were found four curiously worked stones; two of them seem to show curves cut at each end, while the other two show curves at one end only (cf. Fig. 28). These stones are of the customary size of building blocks used in the walls, but their position is doubtful. Possibly they were used to make an arch for the doorways into the side chambers, thus imitating the pseudo-arch noticed in the city walls in Gate 10, but this explanation does not hold for the blocks that show curves at both ends.

The back wall of the stage-building does not run parallel with the roadway which passes to the rear of the theatre; its angle may be judged from the fact that the east end of the back wall is 9.85 m. from the roadway, while the west end is *c.* 12 m. distant.

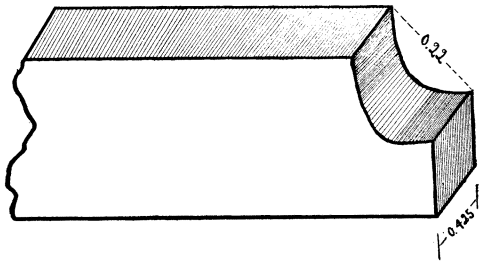


FIGURE 28.—BLOCK WITH CURVE, FOUND IN STAGE-BUILDING.

At a distance of 10.25 m. from the west end of the back wall are the remains of a rectangular foundation which served probably as the pedestal for a statue, or something of that nature. This foundation is 1.40 m. in width, and projects 2.70 m. toward the roadway. No other remains were discovered which could have been connected with the theatre.

The results of the excavation show that the construction of



FIGURE 29. — VIEW OF EXCAVATED PORTION OF CAVEA OF THE THEATRE AT OENIADAE, FROM THE WEST.

the theatre of Oeniadae was confined to one period; no reconstructions are anywhere evident. We may place the period of construction in the third century B.C., from the evidence of the inscriptions on the seats, the forms of the clamps, the form of the columns of the proscenium, and the inscription on the architrave block.

As regards the question of a raised stage, we have no evidence to show that such ever existed; no ramps, no stairways, and nothing else remains which might serve as an ascent to it. The lower seats near the parodoi are made to command a view of the orchestra; they would afford no view of actors on a platform above the pillars of the proscenium. Inasmuch as Acarnania and Aetolia were always regarded as somewhat behind the rest of Greece in the arts of civilization, we might expect a theatre in this region to be near the primitive form of such buildings.

BENJAMIN POWELL.